KIPPAX PARISH COUNCIL

STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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Item 011/FC/2324b.

Review date: May 2024

M Eyre

Signed by Chairman, Councillor Martin Eyre

Introduction

The health, safety and welfare of employees is important to Kippax Parish Council ("the council") and the council is committed to ensuring this is met. The council is committed to identifying and reducing the causes of workplace stress, as the council acknowledges that this is an important health and safety issue.

This policy is applicable to all employees. It is the line manager's responsibility to implement the policy, and it is the council's responsibility to provide the necessary resources.

Definition of stress

Stress is defined by the Health and Safety Executive as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". There is a distinct difference between stress and pressure, as if managed correctly pressure can have a positive effect on an employee, whereas stress can be seen as detrimental to their well-being.

The effects of long-term stress can be seen in physical, intellectual, emotional and behavioural signs. These can include headaches, nausea, tiredness, palpitations, worrying, making mistakes, anger, irritability and job dissatisfaction.

The Council's approach

The council will aim to identify all workplace stressors and risk assessments can be conducted to identify the risks and eradicate them, these will be regularly reviewed. When making proposals to prevent workplace stress the Trade Union Safety Representative will be consulted with. Training will be provided for all line managers in dealing with workplace stress, implementing the council's stress management strategy and identifying any warning signs. Furthermore, the confidential counselling for staff affected by workplace stress will be provided by the council.

Responsibilities

Managers

The responsibilities of line managers are to:

- implement recommendations developed from the risk assessments.
- ensure clear communication between management and employees, specifically on organisational changes that may affect them personally.
- ensure there are developmental opportunities available to all employees.
- monitor employee working hours to ensure they are not being overworked.
- manage holidays to ensure employees are taking their full entitlement.
- ensure that there is a zero tolerance on bullying and harassment.

Personnel Committee

The responsibilities of the Personnel Committee is to:

- provide stress management and risk assessment training for all line managers.
- consult with workplace counsellors or specialist agencies when dealing with specific cases.
- continually review the effectiveness of the council's policy of reducing stress.
- provide guidance on the stress policy to line managers.
- compile sickness absence statistics to measure the effectiveness of the council's stress management policy.
- provide support to staff and management.
- to encourage referrals to occupational workplace counsellors if appropriate.
- be consulted on any potential levers for stress such as changes to work practices or design.
- be involved in the stress risk assessments and stress assessment process.
- monitor the policy to ensure it is combatting the effects of stress and promoting employee wellbeing.

Employees

The responsibilities of employees are to:

- raise any issues relating to workplace stress to their line manager or Personnel Committee
- engage in support that is offered where appropriate.

Employee stress assessment form

It is recognised that working conditions affect worker well-being. Your responses to the questions below will help the council determine working conditions now and enable us to monitor future improvements. In order for the council to compare the current situation with past or future situations, it is important that your responses reflect your work in the last six months.

Question	Never (1)	Seldom (2)	Some times (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
1. I am clear what is expected of me at work					
2. I can decide when to take a break					
3. Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine					
4. I know how to go about getting my job done					
5. I am subjected to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour					
6. I have achievable deadlines					
7. If work gets difficult, my colleagues will help me					
8. I am given supportive feedback on the work I do					
9. I have to work very intensively					
10. I have a say in my own work speed					
11. I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are					
12. I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do					
13. I am clear about the goals and objectives for my department					
14. There is friction or anger between colleagues					
15. I have a choice in deciding how I do my work					
16. I am able to take sufficient breaks					
17. I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organisation					
18. I am pressured to work long hours					
19. I have a choice in deciding what I do at work					
20. I have to work very fast					
21. I am subjected to bullying at work					
22. I have unrealistic time pressures					
23. I can rely on my line manager to help me out with a work problem					

Question	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
24. I get help and support I need from colleagues					
25. I have some say over the way I work					
26. I have sufficient opportunities to question managers about change at work					
27. I receive the respect at work I deserve from my colleagues					
28. Staff are always consulted about change at work					
29. I can talk to my line manager about something that has upset or annoyed me about work					
30. My working time can be flexible					
31. My colleagues are willing to listen to my work related problems					
32. When changes are made at work, I am clear how they will work out in practice					
33. I am supported through emotionally demanding work					
34. Relationships at work are strained					
35. My line manager encourages me at work					